



**2019-2021  
Strategic Plan**

**Table of Contents**

Executive Summary ..... 3

AFN Mission ..... 4

AFN Vision ..... 4

AFN Core Values ..... 4

AFN History ..... 5

Stakeholder Analysis ..... 7

Environmental Scan ..... 7

Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results (SOAR) ..... 8

2019-2021 Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives ..... 9

## Executive Summary

Understanding that the mission of Arizona Faith Network (AFN) calls us to actively engage the statewide community of Arizona in the work of building interfaith relationships and advocating for positive change for the common good, the 2019 AFN leadership engaged in a process to identify the strategic direction of AFN. **This strategic planning team identified five Strategic Priorities to guide the work of AFN beginning in the fall of 2019 through the end of 2021.**

These priorities were identified through a process of organizational review, education and assessment with the purpose of strengthening, streamlining and growing AFN. It is our hope that these five Strategic Priorities become the focus of the current work and vision for the future of AFN.

The work of AFN brings together a diverse network of people dedicated to building bridges of peace, understanding that lead to action and work for positive change in Arizona. To ensure this work is effective, it is essential that it is intentional. This Strategic Plan is a way to ensure that we identify the needs of the Arizona community and focus our resources to meet those needs effectively and efficiently.

This 2019-2021 plan is firmly rooted in the core values, mission and vision of AFN. The plan has been influenced by numerous organizational stakeholders and adjusted based upon input and evaluation.

This Strategic Plan is a living document. The Strategic Planning Team appointed by the AFN Board of Directors in January 2019 determined the Strategic Priorities. In June 2019 the Board of Directors will review this document for approval. Time-specific goals for each Strategic Priority will be regularly updated and continuously evaluated. The Board of Directors will review and approve all changes and updates.

## **AFN Mission**

Inviting people into meaningful relationships, shared prayer and dialogue rooted in our faith traditions, and actions that influence public awareness, engagement and policy.

## **AFN Vision**

People of faith uniting to create positive change for the common good.

## **AFN Core Values**

**Faith:** We value truth and the trustworthiness of human intentions, thoughts, actions and behaviors guided by a holy, divine spirit; recognizing that how this is manifested finds expression in diverse and positive ways.

**Prayer:** We value the power of prayer as communion with God and as a way to seek divine guidance for all that we undertake. We believe in shared prayer among people of various faith traditions, where no one is excluded because of form or doctrine, but where all are included in the privilege of divine communication. We also affirm our multi faith nature and our respect for and trust in each other as we pray according to our own conscience.

**Inclusion:** We value the right of all people, regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, abilities, disabilities, or other human characteristics, to be respected and appreciated as contributing members of the community. We encourage the involvement of people of all backgrounds in AFN who can affirm the mission and core values of AFN.

**Interreligious Efforts:** We value dialogue and collaboration with the followers of world religions, carried out with prudence and love and in witness to our own individual faith and life, and we recognize, preserve and promote positive efforts, spiritual and moral, as well as the sociocultural values found among people of various faiths.

**Equity:** We value the moral and ethical claim of all persons to spiritual, legal, social and economic equality and fairness and we hold a personal commitment to advocate this claim, promote religious liberty and honor the religious conscience of all people.

**Justice:** We value every human being as being of equal worth and we place a priority on taking courses of action that address, confront and help correct conditions of human and environmental injustice and oppression.

**Honest Dialogue:** We value a form of communications where every person is able to honestly express their full range of feelings and thoughts in a straight forward, objective manner without fear of retaliation, with full authenticity and with sensitivity toward possible offense. We agree to listen to/hear each other, exchange ideas and seek to arrive at consensus.

**Human Dignity:** We value the basic right of every human being to have respect and to have their basic needs met in a way that will allow them the opportunity to develop their full potential.

**Love:** We practice the virtue of unconditional love in relationships, as we value and seek to express ourselves among one another in a way that exhibits the characteristics of genuine love: patience, kindness, humility, forbearance, belief, hope and endurance. Through these characteristics, we extend our hands and hearts for the betterment of all people.

**Sacredness of Human Life:** We value and affirm that human life is sacred, and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society.

### **AFN History**

The Arizona Council of Churches (ACC) was established in 1948, preceded by the Arizona Ecumenical Council for twenty-three years. These were significant years of ecumenical development worldwide. The World Council of Churches was formed in 1948, the national Council of Churches of Christ in the USA in 1950. Vatican II convened from 1962 to 1965. These post World War II years also saw the federal government pouring its resources into rebuilding the nation's social institutions. The setting was ripe for progress and the ACC was ready for the challenge.

ACC opened an office, hired staff as needed: Lou Eaton, Dick Muterspaugh, Frank Durand and others, went to work. Using primarily NCCC and Office of Economic Opportunity funds, an ambitious Migrant Opportunities Program (MOP) was initiated under the energetic leadership of the Rev. Harold Lundgren, an American Baptist minister. Clinics, day care centers, schools and community centers were set up at eleven migrant camps around the state.

Starting in 1966 and continuing into the early '70s, summer camping experiences were provided to migrant children. The Department of Labor also granted funds to set up a Skills Training Opportunity Program (STOP) under the guidance of late Rev. George L. Phearson, assisted by Hector Zavaleta, Frank Osuna, Carlos Gutierrez, and the Rev. Ray Dugan.

During this time, the ACC began to serve public institutions, enlisting chaplains for hospitals and prisons. Its centerpiece project was generating funds to build a chapel at Boys Ranch, a school for disadvantaged children. In 1957, the Arizona Council of Churches sponsored thirty Hungarian refugees. In the early '60s, the ACC co-sponsored a Billy Graham Crusade in Phoenix. The audience filled one side of the ASU stadium several nights in a row.

### **The Inauguration of the Arizona Ecumenical Council**

Change came in 1968-69. The Rev. Dr. Richard Smith, Executive of the Presbyterian Synod of the Southwest accepted the presidency of the ACC with the understanding that radical changes were pending. Faith and Order conversations with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Tucson under Bishop Green and Monsignor Donahoe were pursued. Dr. Culver Nelson, a UCC clergyman

from Phoenix, took the lead for ACC. The Diocese was now ready to join with its Protestant brothers and sisters. The Council was redesigned and new bylaws written. The result was that the ACC transitioned to the Arizona Ecumenical Council, with new Bylaws.

The new structure of the AEC was simultaneously broader and tighter than that of the predecessor. The Council became an association of denominational judicatories rather than a federation of individual executives, local clergy, congregations and ecumenical groups. The inclusion of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Tucson, the Diocese of Gallup, and the Diocese of Phoenix, which formed in December of that same year, 1969, also contributed greatly to Council public awareness, program potential and resources. Altogether, nine denominations were represented as charter members: American Baptist, Church of the Brethren, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), The Episcopal Church, Lutheran Church in America, Roman Catholic, United Church of Christ, United Methodist and United Presbyterian.

As the Arizona Ecumenical Council, the most visible ecumenical event of the 1980s was the 1987 visit of Pope John Paul II to Phoenix, and his audience with ecumenical executives at St. Mary's Basilica.

Throughout the years, AEC has worked on Social Concerns, Political Action, Peace Advocacy, Central American Refugee Crisis, Disaster Response, Native American Ministries, Theological Dialogue, Interfaith Dialogue, Public Policy, Earth Care and many other efforts.

### **Arizona Faith Network**

In 2015, the Board voted to revise and rename the organization as Arizona Faith Network. With the hiring of the new Executive Director, a Presbyterian ordained pastor, Rev. Erin Tamayo, AFN dedicated itself to becoming an interreligious organization, one which committed its mission to both civil dialogue and social transformation. Thus in 2015, AFN was born with the mission of "Bringing together People of Faith, under the inspiration of God, as a bridge to understanding and action- Being Together, Talking Together, Acting Together."

Since 2015 AFN has undergone an annual process of developing a mission focus for its work. This process provides direction to the work of AFN and has included the following topics: Municipal ID Project (1 PHX ID)(2015), Economic Inequality (2016-2017), Faith, Equity & Inclusion (2018) and Criminal Legal Reform (2019-2020).

In the summer of 2017 Dr. Jannah Scott, a leader of First Institutional Baptist Church of Phoenix, was hired as an Interim Executive Director. Dr. Scott helped AFN to refine its vision, mission and restructure the organizational bylaws. In January of 2019 Rev. Katie Sexton, an ordained Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister, was hired as the new Executive Director of Arizona Faith Network. The work of a new strategic direction of AFN was launched in January of 2019.

*For the full detailed organizational history please visit our website at [www.arizonafaithnetwork.org](http://www.arizonafaithnetwork.org).*

## Stakeholder Analysis

Before any organization change can be explored it is essential to include key decision makers in the process. A stakeholder analysis was completed to help to identify the key individuals and communities who AFN serves in order to ensure the work of the organization is efficient and effective. **They key stakeholders of AFN are: AFN Leadership** (Board of Directors, Officers, Commissions, and Staff), **AFN Partners** (World Religions, Congregations/Communities, Incorporated Nonprofits and Businesses, Ecumenical/Interreligious Groups, and Friends), **all people of faith residing in Arizona and the wider Arizona Community.**

*For full term definitions and roles within AFN please read our 2018 revised Bylaws on our website at [www.arizonafaithnetwork.org](http://www.arizonafaithnetwork.org).*

## Environmental Scan

An environmental scan was done as part of the strategic planning process in order to identify other local organizations doing similar work to AFN. This systematic process of data collection allowed the team to make informed decisions on the strategic initiatives of the organizations. This process provided data necessary to focus our work so we do not duplicate other organizations. This allows AFN to better focus our resources. After a thorough scan it was determined that the work of the below organization aligned closely with the work of AFN.

### **Arizona Interfaith Movement (AZIFM)**

Established 1995

Focused on engaging the community through interfaith dialogue and education. No advocacy work.

Events include annual Golden Rule Banquet and Experience Interfaith Dinner.

[www.interfaithmovement.com](http://www.interfaithmovement.com)

### **Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) Arizona Affiliates**

(Valley Interfaith Project (VIP), Pima County Interfaith Council (PCIC), Yuma County Interfaith Sponsorship Committee)

Established VIP 1987, PCIC 2015, YCISC no date listed

Faith based grass root community organizing agencies for advocacy and social justice nonpartisan issues. VIP, PCIC and YCISC are branches of the national Industrial Areas Foundation community-organizing network.

Events include Townhall to educate on current issues and advocacy at the legislature.

[www.valleyinterfaithprojectaz.com](http://www.valleyinterfaithprojectaz.com)

*For the full detailed work of the Environmental Scan please visit our website at [www.arizonafaithnetwork.org](http://www.arizonafaithnetwork.org).*

**Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results (SOAR)**

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Judicatory Heads</li> <li>-Action Oriented</li> <li>-Proactive Invitation and Participation in Justice Work</li> <li>-Strong Partners</li> <li>-Bridging Agent</li> <li>-Strong Potential to Build Capacity</li> <li>-Strong Leadership</li> <li>-Inclusivity</li> <li>-Loyalty of Members</li> <li>-Values</li> <li>-Impact</li> <li>-Relationships</li> </ul>	<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Increase diversity</li> <li>-Help Organize BERT (State Interfaith Leaders)</li> <li>-Build Interfaith Youth Council</li> <li>-Mentor Next Generation</li> <li>-Communication</li> <li>-Tracking Achievements/Dashboard</li> <li>-Theological Dialogue Groups</li> <li>-Local Community Groups</li> <li>-Develop Strong Relationship with Board</li> </ul>
<p><b>Aspirations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Be the Primary Interfaith Bridging Agent in Arizona</li> <li>-Develop the first Arizona Interfaith Youth Council</li> <li>-Become more diverse</li> <li>-Expand network throughout the state</li> <li>-Achieve Criminal Legal Reform in Arizona</li> <li>-Develop clear organization structure</li> </ul>	<p><b>Results</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Be financially stable by 2021</li> <li>-Be at least 50% grant funded by 2021</li> <li>-Hire additional support staff by 2021</li> <li>-Implement the “Know Your Neighbor” Interfaith Dialogue Campaign in 2019</li> <li>-Implement the Interfaith Youth Council in 2019</li> </ul>





## 2019-2021 Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives Summary

### **Strategy 1: Clarify Organizational Workflow**

- Articulate what distinguishes AFN from similar organizations
- Revise the structure and work of AFN commissions and committees to more clearly reflect the aims of our mission statement
- Evaluate the role, authority, and responsibility of our leadership structures with respect to the mission statement

### **Strategy 2: Develop a Sustainable Financial Plan**

- Develop and implement a fundraising team and plan
- Identify and invest in sustainable financial income resources
- Develop a financial plan for organizational growth

### **Strategy 3: Be an Active Voice for the AFN Mission Focus Criminal Legal Reform (2019-2020)**

- Develop a mission focus team and strategic advocacy and education plan
- Educate and activate faith communities for advocacy
- Advocate for reform with the appropriate officials and leaders

**Strategy 4:  
Expand Arizona Faith Network**

- Expand the network throughout the state  
*Develop the “Know Your Neighbor” Interfaith Dialogue program*
- Grow diversity within the organization  
*Develop the Interfaith Youth Council*
- Develop partners from faith communities not currently represented

**Strategy 5:  
Strengthen Current AFN Relationships**

- Strengthen relationships between current leaders and partners
- Strengthen connections to AFN’s programming, mission and vision